

on their health care. For over two years, the Office of Surgeon General has been vacant. It is irresponsible to put partisanship ahead of public health and safety.

Dr. Satcher is an excellent choice to be the Nation's Doctor. I look forward to working closely with him, and I urge the Senate to move expeditiously to approve this nomination, so that we can deal more effectively with the country's important health challenges. I am confident that Dr. Satcher will serve America well. He deserves to be confirmed now, before this session of Congress ends.●

#### DRUG DIRECTOR USE OF BIDEN DRUG BUDGET CERTIFICATION AUTHORITY

● Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I rise to offer some remarks on Drug Director Barry McCaffrey's decision to decertify the Defense Department's proposed antidrug budget for fiscal 1999.

At the outset, let me state that I support General McCaffrey's decision to request that the Defense Department increase its budget request by \$140 million for the antidrug initiatives the General identifies: \$24 million to boost antidrug task forces on the border to help implement the United States-Mexico Declaration signed by Presidents Clinton and Zedillo in May, 1997; \$75 million for enforcement and interdiction to reduce the flow of cocaine out of the Andean Region; \$30 million for boost National Guard drug efforts on the southern border; and \$12 million to target drug trafficking criminal activity in the Caribbean.

Even beyond the specifics of this issue, I am greatly heartened by the fact that General McCaffrey has chosen to exercise this important budget-setting authority. I must admit that I have been frustrated that, until General McCaffrey acted, no drug director had ever used this authority—not William Bennett, not Robert Martinez, and not Lee Brown.

Let me also be up-front with my colleagues, one of the reasons I so strongly favor this decision is because I wrote this authority into law. For more than a decade, I debated with the Reagan administration and my colleagues to establish the Office of National Drug Control Policy. One of the reasons my legislation was so bitterly opposed for so long was because I put some real teeth into this legislation. And, of all the teeth, it is this budget authority which is the sharpest of all.

Let me also explain to my colleagues that this so-called Biden Drug Budget Authority not only gives the Drug Director the authority to decertify the drug budget requests of the drug agencies, but it is crystal clear what must happen next. Just read the law: If the Drug Director exercises this authority, "the head of the Department or Agency shall comply with such a request."

It does not get much clearer than that.

To make one more point—now before the Senate we have legislation to reauthorize the Drug Director's office. Yesterday, the Judiciary Committee reported the bipartisan Hatch-Biden reauthorization bill. A bill cosponsored by Senators THURMOND, COVERDELL, DEWINE and FEINSTEIN.

It is my hope that not only will the full Senate pass this legislation before we adjourn, but also that the leadership of the House reject the unproductive and partisan approach it adopted a few weeks ago and come onboard the bipartisan Hatch-Biden bill.

Nothing puts the need for a Drug Director in starker focus than General McCaffrey's action on the Defense Department drug budget. My colleagues should need no other example—though there are many others—to recognize the importance of having a Drug Director.

I urge my colleagues to support the General's decision on the Defense Department budget, and I urge my colleagues to take the concrete step it is within our power to do—pass the law to keep the Drug Office in place.

#### NEIGHBORHOOD REINVESTMENT CORPORATION

● Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, decent, and affordable housing in healthy neighborhoods for all Americans remains a national goal and a serious challenge. One federal initiative that is an exemplar of good housing policy and a wise investment is the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation. Chartered by Congress in 1978 as a public, non-profit corporation, the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation's purpose is to increase affordable housing and home ownership opportunities while revitalizing low and moderate income neighborhoods that are in decline. That purpose is carried out in partnership with 174 neighborhood based, non-profit organizations in 44 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. These organizations bring together neighborhood residents, local governments, and the business community to garner diverse resources to carry out neighborhood resident-generated housing and community development plans.

At least one measure of the effectiveness of the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation and its network of local partners is the kind of return gained on the investment. The federal appropriation to the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation for fiscal year 1998 was \$60,000,000 which leveraged another \$500,000,000 in resources for housing and community development.

The Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation is one of three components of an innovative model of federal-local and public-private partnerships. NeighborWorks® is the network of local non-profit organizations that carry out the development work in neighborhoods. The Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation provides grants and technical assistance to the

NeighborWorks® member organizations, and conducts extensive training for neighborhood residents and local organization staff. The third component is Neighborhood Housing Services of America, a national non-profit secondary market that provides financial services to the NeighborWorks® network.

Neighborhood reinvestment requires holistic thinking and action in multiple directions, but basic to neighborhood stability is housing. Preserving the aging housing stock in urban neighborhoods and maintaining housing affordability are key objectives of the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation and the NeighborWorks® network. Helping low and moderate income homeowners obtain financing and qualified contractors to rehabilitate their houses is a staple activity of NeighborWorks® member organizations. Rehabilitating existing homes on behalf of low and moderate income first-time home buyers adds new stakeholders to neighborhoods. Increasing the supply of affordable rental housing helps to further meet the housing needs of neighborhood residents.

Many of the NeighborWorks® member organizations are mutual housing associations, innovative experiments in an alternative form of home ownership that is proving to be very successful. Mutual housing is permanent housing that assures long term affordability and tenure for low and moderate income people in a housing system over which the residents have considerable control. Mutual housing development and units are owned by mutual housing associations. Residents do not directly buy or sell their units, but are represented on the association board of directors. As members of the association and based on their occupancy agreements, the residents in mutual housing are considered in most states to have a personal property ownership interest in the property. Affordability, protection from displacement, democratic participation in the management of the housing, and a resident stake in the sustained health of the neighborhood are all attributes of mutual housing living. Exploring diverse forms of housing, such as mutual housing associations, can help point the way to improving housing affordability for low income people.

A key feature of the success of the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation and NeighborWorks® partnership is the training developed and conducted by the Neighborhood Reinvestment Training Institute. Residents, local organization board members, and local organization staff participate in extensive training in leadership development, engagement of residents in neighborhood organizations, conflict resolution, coalition building, organization management, resource development, and much more. This high quality training is replicated in many parts of the country and the lessons learned put to work in local communities.